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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

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SUBJECT Communication System in Saxony-Anhalt

This document is hereby regraded to ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1973 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.
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21 July 1947

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ORIGIN

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1. At a conference of Ministerial Directors of Saxony-Anhalt, in Halle on 16 April 1947, the head of the Postal and Communications Department, Sabinski, presided. The situation of the various parts of the communications set-up was discussed and reported upon, and a general discussion of special questions followed.
2. The telephone system, reorganized immediately after the 1945 collapse, consists of two sections, the general and the official, operating as separate networks (connections between them are forbidden by Russian orders). The chief conveyors of the official network are controlled by Halle and Magdeburg, and only connections to adjacent Kreise and offices are permitted.
3. The five largest of the thirty-three pre-war telephone offices were destroyed and the communication system was ordered reduced by the Potsdam Agreement. In consequence, 1506 kilometers of telephone trunk lines were dismantled in 1946 and seventy-two additional in 1947. Collective repeater and frequency-clearing installations had to be released, as well as 24,000 desk telephones. Today only 1164 kilometers of telephone trunk lines exist, and only about half of these are usable. Of these lines, about sixty percent have been requisitioned by the occupation forces, so that at most ten percent of previous traffic lines are available to the German population.
4. About forty percent of the line capacity is in use. The number of connecting keys was set at 1 to 200 (one connection for every 200 inhabitants), but in the case of the larger cities Halle and Magdeburg, a more favorable arrangement set the ratio at 2 to 100. Because of this reduction of service, individual calls are very difficult and have to be limited in time, and telephone costs have risen proportionately.
5. Interzonal telephone traffic is permitted only by the occupation forces after special application and exhaustive investigation. In Land Saxony-Anhalt, up to April 1947, only 117 persons had been allowed interzonal conversations.

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NO CHANGE in classification

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-2-

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6. The telegraph system, with thirteen lines actually in operation, is tolerated tacitly by SMA because it was evident that without telegraphic communication German government offices could not execute Russian orders promptly. The lines in Saxony-Anhalt are controlled by the police, but equipment and personnel are administered by the government. The Land system is connected with the Soviet Zone system, the Central Administration, and the office of ADN (Allgemeine Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro).
7. The supply situation and its difficulties were summarized. All material on hand at the time of the German surrender was seized, and all material that had come from military supplies had to be surrendered to the occupying powers as war booty. Present quotas for maintenance and construction are so small that they will not permit continuance of communications traffic.
8. The German Postal Service is not administered by the Postal and Communications Department but has its own separate administrative and financial offices. The number of former Nazis in post office positions was estimated as seventeen percent; the post office had been particularly infiltrated with Nazis. Cooperation between the Post Office and the Postal Department was described as difficult because of the bureaucratic character which still prevails in the Post Office.
9. In the radio network, the Land broadcasting station Bernburg (D76) was rebuilt, principally under the Postal and Communications Department auspices, since the Postal Service alone was not able to handle the work. Difficulties in restoring radio equipment were discussed; it was pointed out that no factory for radio tubes exists in the Russian Zone and that goods to barter for tubes from the West were virtually non-existent. Radio restoration for the civilian sector is dependent upon the approval of licenses by SMA. Special arrangements were to be made for providing radios to the blind, since that is their only means of political reorientation.
10. Until the summer of 1946, the weather service had been under the Postal and Communications department; it is now under the Department of Agriculture and Forestry. About seventy-five percent of necessary reconstruction has been completed.

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Comment: Source apparently refers to production for German civilian consumption.

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